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Chair: Ms. Leinarte

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention

Eighth periodic report of the Republic of Korea (CEDAW/C/KOR/8; CEDAW/C/KOR/Q/8 and CEDAW/C/KOR/Q/8/Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of the Republic of Korea took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea), introducing her country's eighth periodic report, said that achieving gender equality was a key national policy aim and the Government was seeking to strengthen cooperation with civil society to that end. In the previous year alone, the proportion of female Cabinet ministers had risen from 9 to 32 per cent.

3. As part of efforts to introduce gender mainstreaming, the Government had created the second Basic Plan for Gender Equality Policy for the period 2018–2022, which set out the policy goals for each ministry, and had passed the Gender Impact Analysis and Assessment Act, which had resulted in a twofold increase in the number of such analyses conducted. The impact of gender would also be assessed by local authorities from 2017. The gender-responsive budget had risen to almost 30 trillion won in 2017, an increase from 3.7 to 7.4 per cent of the total government budget since 2010. The "Ten Main Projects for Greater Gender Equality Experience" and "Voice for Gender Equality" campaigns had been launched to raise awareness of gender equality issues in everyday life.

4. Under the Plan to Enhance Women's Representation in the Public Sector for the period 2018–2022, the proportion of high-ranking female government officials would be increased from the current 6 per cent to 10 per cent by 2022. Gender quotas would also be introduced for civil servants, executives in public organizations, academics, and military and police officers. The Korean Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology encouraged female students to embark on careers in science and engineering, with support from the Government's fourth Basic Plan for Supporting Women Scientists and Engineers for the period 2019–2023.

5. To tackle sexual harassment, the Government would conduct inspections of public organizations and private businesses with 30 or more employees by the end of 2018 while introducing harsh penalties for sexual harassment, providing proactive support for victims and raising awareness of the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace. The State party planned to implement more stringent punitive measures for distributing illegal material over the Internet within the first half of 2018 and to empower the Korea Communications Standards Commission to delete and block such material at the request of the law enforcement agencies. Initiatives to address stalking and partner violence included an emergency hotline to assist victims, the provision of protection and recovery programmes as part of psychotherapy services and efforts to raise awareness of the issue. Investigations into sexual assault cases had been improved through the creation of the Sexual Violence Response Division of the Korean police, the development of investigative methods and the training of judges handling sexual assault cases.

6. Her Government operated 42 centres for women with disabilities that provided counselling, vocational training, education programmes and practical information. The Multicultural Family Support Centre Family offered counselling, interpreting and translation services and parenting programmes to immigrant women and multicultural families to help them adjust to life in the Republic of Korea. In addition, a number of organizations assisted those women in finding employment and ran Korean language courses for children from such families. The Multicultural Families Support Act had been amended in 2017 to make multiculturalism courses mandatory for schoolteachers. Single parents with low incomes were entitled to a monthly child allowance and additional benefits were available to single parents aged 24 or under. From 2018, a national day would be set for 10 May to raise awareness of single-parent families and to reduce the social stigma attached to them.

7. As part of efforts to address the lower employment rate among women in their thirties, the Government ran 155 centres around the country providing job training, counselling and other services to encourage women to rejoin the labour force after having children. A certification programme offered companies incentives to promote a family-friendly culture and the State party intended to require companies to submit gender-disaggregated data on pay in an effort to close the gender wage gap. As part of its goal to encourage parents to share childcare responsibilities, the Government planned to adopt a policy to reduce the working hours of parents with children, to promote the involvement of men in childcare and housework and to increase the parental leave allowance from 1.5 million won at present to 2 million as from July 2018.

8. The Government was currently working on the second National Action Plan on Women and Peace and Security to reaffirm the role of women in conflict prevention and to reinforce gender mainstreaming policies in national defence, peace, unification and foreign affairs. As a donor country providing official development assistance, the Republic of Korea played a key role in the effort to eliminate discrimination and empower women in developing countries. In that regard, the Korea International Cooperation Agency, the Government's foreign aid body, had devised a medium-term gender equality strategy for the period 2016–2020 to implement gender mainstreaming in development cooperation projects.

Articles 1 to 6

9. **Ms. Manalo** said she regretted that the Republic of Korea had not enacted any law or constitutional provision against discrimination since the State party's ratification of the Convention in 1984, in spite of the Committee's recommendation in its concluding observations from the last reporting cycle (CEDAW/C/KOR/CO/7, para. 15). She would appreciate an explanation as to why the Government had not yet withdrawn its reservation to article 16 (1) (g) of the Convention, on the equal rights of husbands and wives. The Constitution provided for gender equality in family life; nevertheless, the patrilineal principle was retained and the Family Litigation Act removed the right of the mother to seek to change her child's family name. She wished to know why that was the case. She invited the delegation to indicate whether the State party had accepted the amendment of article 20 of the Convention, since there was no mention in the periodic report. She would appreciate a clarification of the State party's claim that its report had reflected the comments and feedback of NGOs given that no official procedure that allowed human rights organizations to report to the National Assembly existed. She also wished to know whether the Government envisaged implementing a legal and institutional framework to broaden its recognition of NGO activities and to provide them with financial support.

10. **Ms. Park** Eun Young (Republic of Korea) said that the content of a potential anti-discrimination law had been under discussion for 10 years. However, resistance to the bill had continued to impede its enactment. The adoption of a general anti-discrimination law would be covered in the third National Action Plan for 2017–2021.

11. **Ms. Choi** Hye-min (Republic of Korea) said that the National Human Rights Commission had held a conference on the adoption of legislation pursuant to the Committee's recommendations with regard to article 16 (1) (g), and discussions were ongoing. Although the reservation had not been withdrawn, current law did not contravene the Convention since, under the Civil Act, parents had the option to decide whose family name the child would take and the child's family name could be changed at the request of either parent subject to approval by the family court. Cases involving the change of a child's family name required the permission of the courts. However, a legal provision providing that a paternal relative had to give his or her consent had been removed to ensure the welfare of the child.

12. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that the newly elected Government was committed to strengthening cooperation and consultation with NGOs and recognized the importance of providing them with financial support. For that reason, it had plans to increase its funding contributions. Several women's organizations were, however, already receiving support.

13. **Ms. Manalo**, while welcoming the Government's commitment to reaching a social consensus on a general anti-discrimination law, said she was concerned that the State party had spent several decades trying to achieve that goal without success. She wondered whether it was now time for a change of approach, such as by amending the Constitution to prohibit discrimination.

14. **Ms. Schulz** said that article 1 of the Convention, which covered discrimination against women, including direct, indirect and multiple or intersecting forms, had become an obligation of the State party on ratification of the Convention and was therefore for immediate, not progressive, implementation. However, alternative reports indicated that not only was discrimination against lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and girls widespread, but also that the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family had actively intervened to prevent a municipal order granting sexual minorities the right to equal treatment. In that light, she wished to know whether the State party intended to accelerate efforts to adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation.

15. **Ms. Choi** Hye-min (Republic of Korea) said that, although the principle of gender equality was contained in the Constitution, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family had presented a bill on gender equality to promote equal participation in elected office and expand maternity and paternity rights, among other aspects. Recommendations for a new provision on gender equality had also been made by a committee with responsibility for assessing and proposing amendments to the Constitution.

16. **Ms. Park** Eun Young (Republic of Korea) said that the Government continued to work closely with civil society towards the development of a comprehensive anti-discrimination law.

17. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family was committed to taking action against discrimination, including on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. She noted the concerns raised by the Committee regarding the lack of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation. One of the Government's priorities was to work towards a social consensus on the issue. Although further efforts to amend the Constitution were needed, a wider social discussion was still necessary.

18. **Ms. Manalo** pointed out that constitutional provisions or laws that guaranteed gender equality and prohibited discrimination were mutually reinforcing and, thus, both were essential. She would encourage the State party to urgently consider amending the Constitution to include a provision on discrimination or introducing a comprehensive anti-discrimination law to strengthen existing constitutional provisions.

19. **Ms. Schulz** said that, while it was true that social-consensus building was important, the role of government was to lead change and express the values of the society it wanted to create. On the issue of discrimination, she hoped that the Government would take the lead, not follow.

20. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that the Committee's concerns would be relayed to the Government and every effort would be made to achieve further progress on the issue. Regarding the amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention, the response would shortly be provided in writing.

21. **Ms. Ameline** said that she wished to know what mechanisms were in place and measures envisaged to raise awareness about the Committee's forthcoming concluding observations and ensure their implementation. She wished to know whether the Gender Equality Committee would be attached to the Office of the President, thus strengthening its authority; what steps were being taken to adopt the comprehensive anti-discrimination law, as recommended by the National Human Rights Commission; how gender-equality measures were being coordinated at local and national levels; and what authority and resources were given to the gender equality officers working around the country. Regarding the system of gender-responsive budgeting, she would be interested to know: whether the methodology used had been evaluated and, if so, its outcome; how overall results, rather than each individual project, were assessed; and what the Government was doing to highlight the achievement of gender equality as a critical part of meeting the Sustainable

Development Goals. Lastly, in view of how technologically advanced the Republic of Korea was, she wondered what steps were being taken to improve women's participation in decision-making and democratic processes through information communication technologies.

22. **Ms. Rana**, referring to the State party's second national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, said that she would welcome information on the results of the first national action plan and how they had shaped the latest version. She wished to know to what extent civil society was involved in implementing those plans, what legal and institutional measures, including budget allocation and monitoring mechanisms, were in place to support implementation and what proportion of women participated in the numerous peace negotiations that took place in the State party. Regarding "comfort women", who had been forced into sexual slavery during the Second World War, she wondered what had been the outcome of a 2017 review of the related 2015 agreement between the Republic of Korea and Japan and of the activities of the Reconciliation and Healing Foundation and what steps had been taken to hear from the victims and ensure their right to redress.

23. **Ms. Nadaraia** said that, despite progress in terms of women's participation in public life, structural and cultural gender-based discrimination remained pervasive. For instance, although women accounted for some 45 per cent of public officials, just 12 per cent occupied high-level positions. Moreover, despite a quota requiring that not more than two thirds of members of government committees should be of the same gender, women's representation in the five most prominent committees was just 15 per cent. Since the Government had created a plan aimed at improving women's representation in the public sector during the period 2017–2022, she wished to know what practical steps were being taken to increase the effectiveness of its temporary special measures.

24. **Ms. Manalo** said she noted that the national machinery for the advancement of women was composed of three separate entities: the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, the National Human Rights Commission of Korea and the Gender Equality Committee. She would be interested to know how those different bodies coordinated their work. She questioned the wisdom of assigning a ministry responsibility for the dual portfolio of gender equality and family affairs. There was a danger that, when a conflict arose between the two, gender equality would be sacrificed in favour of family issues. How would they ensure that gender equality took priority?

25. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that one of the main reasons for establishing the Gender Equality Committee had been to create an overarching body to monitor issues relating to gender equality. Once up and running, the Committee would indeed be attached to the Office of the President.

26. The Committee's concerns regarding her Ministry, which had responsibility for both gender equality and family affairs, were reasonable. Society had, however, undergone major changes in the past decade, and the concept of the family had itself altered with the emergence of new family structures, such as single-parent families. Policies and services that recognized the diversity of family structures and provided them with appropriate support were necessary, but every effort would be made to ensure that there was no conflict between family issues and the pursuit of gender equality.

27. **Ms. Seo** Eun Hee (Republic of Korea) said that women's representation in the public sector, particularly in middle and senior management posts, had steadily increased owing to various government measures. For example, gender quotas had been introduced to combat the low proportion of women in senior positions. Moreover, the Government aimed to achieve a 21 per cent increase in women directors by 2022. Appointments were checked quarterly to ensure that public agencies were meeting their targets, which were legally binding.

28. **Ms. Kim** Hye Jin (Republic of Korea) said that, regarding the Sustainable Development Goals, the Government was taking steps to mainstream gender into its development cooperation programmes. A five-year strategy had been developed with a view to achieving the Government's vision of a gender-equal society and there were plans

to build a system to ensure the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals across all areas.

29. **Ms. Lee** Gun-jeong (Republic of Korea) said that the gender-responsive budgeting system accounted for almost 8 per cent of the State budget. At the current time, more than 34,000 projects were in receipt of funding, compared to around 330 in 2010. Impact assessments had been introduced in 2015 and attention was now focused on how best to use and share the results.

30. **Ms. Jeung** Eun (Republic of Korea) said that the country's first national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) had been introduced in 2014, with civil society taking part in annual implementation meetings. However, the review of the first plan had highlighted the need to increase civil-society participation and capacity-building measures, aspects that were being incorporated into the second plan. Moreover, one of the goals of the second plan was to increase women's representation in government committees.

31. **Ms. Ameline**, emphasizing that achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals was irrevocably linked not only to women's participation but also to women's access to decision-making, asked whether plans to increase women's representation in senior public-sector positions also took into account the need to include women in decisions regarding future programmes and whether there were plans to evaluate the Korean Gender Equality Index alongside other performance indicators.

32. **Ms. Verges** asked whether the 7 per cent of the State budget allocated to gender-responsive budgeting, as mentioned in the State party's opening statement, was solely for the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family or covered all ministries dealing with gender issues.

33. **Ms. Lee** Yun-a (Republic of Korea) said that the Government had prioritized efforts to increase the participation of women in decision-making. There were some government committees on which the representation of women remained low, but the target set for 2020 was a rate of 40 per cent on every committee. Women currently made up about 40 per cent of the members of Government committees on average.

34. The gender-responsive budget was an interministerial budget for the promotion of gender policy. The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, the Ministry of Employment and Labour and the Ministry of Health and Welfare were responsible for analysing its implementation.

35. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that, although the budget made available to the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family was not large, it should be borne in mind that other ministries also had budgets for gender policy. The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family was responsible for evaluating the implementation of gender policy.

36. The new Government recognized the importance of supporting surviving victims of sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army, who had been known as "comfort women". The maintenance paid to them had recently been increased substantially, and they were provided with rental accommodation and free medical care. The Government was preparing a project to document the plight of the "comfort women", enable surviving victims to make their voices heard and raise awareness of their experiences among young people. It also planned to establish an institute dedicated to their experiences. The surviving victims themselves would be consulted throughout the project. The first victim to have come forward, Kim Hak-sun, had done so on 14 August 1991, and all victims of sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army had since been commemorated annually on that day.

37. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that it was unclear why the State party had not already implemented the various measures that had been planned to protect women from online misogyny and hate crimes fomented online. In that connection, it would be useful if the delegation could indicate what steps would be taken to prevent cyber violence against women and girls, how online platforms and operators would be regulated with a view to preventing the distribution of offending content and whether measures would be adopted to facilitate the prosecution of those who redistributed such content. She wished to know what steps would be taken to amend the legislative framework in order to facilitate the

prosecution of all forms of cyber violence. In addition, she wondered whether the Government was aware of a recent trend whereby female victims of sexual violence were accused of having made false accusations and were sued, whether it was studying that trend, what steps it had taken in response, whether the victims would be offered free legal aid and what measures had been taken to prevent that and similar abuses of the legal system. On a related point, she wondered whether there were plans to abolish the practice of questioning female victims on their sexual history and to render such evidence inadmissible in court.

38. With regard to sexual and domestic violence, she would like to know whether the penalties imposed on convicted perpetrators who violated protection or restraining orders would be strengthened, whether systematic data on indictments, convictions and sentences were collected and whether persons in de facto unions, including single-sex partners, could be prosecuted under existing legislation. It would be helpful to learn whether, in line with a Supreme Court ruling of 2013, marital rape would be incorporated into the Criminal Code as a specific offence. Lastly, the delegation was invited to indicate whether comprehensive measures, including counselling and healing programmes, had been organized for female defectors from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, who were often subjected to sexual violence in various forms.

39. **Ms. Hofmeister** said that the State party was to be commended for its ratification of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the incorporation of the principle of universal jurisdiction into the Criminal Code. However, certain groups of women, including unaccompanied migrant girls and women involved in prostitution and the sex industry, remained vulnerable to trafficking in persons. In that connection, it would be helpful if the delegation could indicate what steps would be taken to introduce a victim protection system, including an improved mechanism to identify victims, and what measures would be adopted to help victims obtain legal migration status and abolish the legal obstacles to victims' full enjoyment of their human rights.

40. She would appreciate comprehensive data on the impact of the newly introduced legal concept of a "victim of prostitution" and wished to know how perpetrators of the exploitation of prostitutes and sex workers were identified, what programmes had been developed to reduce demand and whether exit programmes had been introduced to protect prostitutes from exploitation.

41. With regard to the situation of the former "comfort women", the resolution reached in the 2015 bilateral agreement between the State party and Japan did not seem "final and irreversible", as had been claimed. Indeed, it did not constitute a victim-centred approach and denied victims' rights to truth, justice and reparation. In that connection, she wondered what efforts had been made to improve the situation of the surviving "comfort women" and ensure that they were respected in society and what measures were planned to support those women and the families of deceased victims.

42. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that that the #MeToo movement had gathered speed in the Republic of Korea. Misogyny and violence against women existed in many countries and were connected to high youth unemployment rates and other factors. The President took a strong personal interest in the matter. Measures had been taken to combat cybersex offences. For example, counselling programmes had been introduced for victims, a programme to remove offending content from the Internet had been launched, and victims were offered medical assistance. The Ministry subsidized the substantial cost of removing sexually violent content from the Internet until that cost could be recovered from the offender. Victims enjoyed free legal aid in the event of litigation. There was a need to raise awareness of sexual violence on the Internet and to strengthen the existing legal framework with a view to bringing a larger number of perpetrators to justice.

43. **Ms. Lee** Yun-a (Republic of Korea) said that, in 2018, the Government would promote various policies to tackle cyber violence against women and girls, including policies to support the victims of such crimes. A bill on victims' right to redress was currently under review. It was important to introduce measures not only to respond to

content that had already been circulated, but also to prevent its circulation in the first place. The Government had developed awareness-raising materials to transform public attitudes towards online sexual violence. The issue had been incorporated into the curriculum used to train public officials on sexual violence.

44. **Mr. Choi** Dong Won (Republic of Korea) said that rape was a specific offence in the Criminal Code. In 2013, the Supreme Court had ruled that it was possible for a woman to be the victim of a rape by her legal husband, noting that there was no legislative provision that explicitly excluded rape in such cases. Although Supreme Court rulings did not set binding precedents, they nevertheless served an important function. Marital rape had recently been recognized in a number of other rulings.

45. **Ms. Choi** Hye-min (Republic of Korea) said that, according to the results of a recent fact-finding survey conducted by the National Human Rights Commission of Korea, 85 per cent of women in the Republic of Korea had experienced misogyny online. The Korea Communications Standards Commission monitored the web and could request the removal of discriminatory or prejudicial content. In order to eradicate misogyny, it would be necessary to foster a culture of gender equality. To that end, the Government planned to strengthen the gender equality training provided for teachers, as had been provided for in the Second Basic Plan for Gender Equality Policy. Further research would be carried out to improve the response mounted against the phenomenon.

46. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that the Republic of Korea had a gender equality task force whose members included experts drawn from a range of sectors. Following several rounds of meetings, it had decided to focus its efforts on the education and media sectors.

47. **Ms. Lee** Yun-a (Republic of Korea) said that women who defected from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea faced a heightened risk of domestic and sexual violence, and current efforts to mitigate that risk were inadequate. At dedicated centres in the Republic of Korea, victims had access to psychological therapy and counselling services, including both professional counselling and peer counselling.

48. **Mr. Kwon** Hyeok Yong (Republic of Korea) said that the penalties applicable for domestic violence were set out in the Criminal Code and relevant laws. The decision to mandate police officers to provide an on-site response to domestic violence incidents had led to an increase in the number of recorded cases. Men had been the perpetrators in nearly 80 per cent of the 45,206 cases recorded in 2017. Existing legislation provided for stringent penalties for offenders and protection measures for victims, particularly in cases in which recidivism was a concern. Less serious cases could be handled as home protection cases. There was a provision to ensure that victims were heard, and they also had the option of suing the offender for damages.

49. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) she said that the recent increase in the number of cases of domestic violence was due to the increased police response rate and to a greater social awareness of the crime. With regard to the 2015 bilateral agreement signed between Japan and the Republic of Korea, the President had made clear that the disagreement between the two countries did not concern the decision to adopt a victim-centred approach. The victims would continue to be consulted on any issues that concerned them.

50. **Mr. Kwon** Hyeok Yong (Republic of Korea) said that the Government had introduced a set of indicators to facilitate the identification of victims of trafficking during investigations and court proceedings. Police officers were trained to identify victims. A round table on trafficking had been organized to support prosecutors and police officers at the local level.

51. **Mr. Choi** Dong Won (Republic of Korea) said that, in certain cases of domestic violence, the offender was spared prosecution in exchange for accepting counselling. The aim of that approach was to reduce the rate of recidivism. There was a three-strike policy to ensure that repeat offenders received more stringent penalties, and the prosecuting authorities sought custodial sentences in cases in which a deadly weapon had been used. In 2013, the provisions that had rendered sexual offences indictable only if a complaint was

lodged had been abolished, and the police now worked to identify victims who had yet to come forward. Awareness-raising activities had been conducted to encourage victims of domestic violence and sexual assault to come forward. In addition, specialized officials were being mobilized, training was being developed, and victim protection measures were being enhanced.

52. **Ms. Manalo** said that it was important, even in countries where female genital mutilation was not perceived as a problem, to have prevention programmes in place, as the practice was spreading throughout the world. She wished to know whether the State party had such a programme and whether there had been any reported cases of female genital mutilation in the country.

53. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that cyber violence against women and girls posed a difficult challenge and asked whether the Government was considering introducing harsher penalties for service providers that provided a platform for such sexual violence. Simply deleting violent online material did not resolve the problem: it was necessary to focus on punishing those who hosted or redistributed such material.

54. She also wished to know whether persons who violated restraining or protection orders were subject to not only to administrative fines but also criminal penalties. Noting that victims of sexual violence had been sued for defamation or for making false complaints, she wondered whether such persons were entitled to free legal aid to mount a legal defence. With regard to domestic violence, what protections were afforded to same-sex couples? She would also appreciate details of the protections and care provided to women victims of violence who had defected from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

55. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that the Government was committed to tackling sexual offences against women and girls on the Internet, including by deleting online material and preventing its redistribution. She agreed that prevention measures were essential and noted that recently passed legislation was aimed at dealing with perpetrators of such offences.

56. No cases of female genital mutilation had been reported in the Republic of Korea, although it was possible that the problem could potentially affect migrant women. As there were no indications that the practice existed in her country, no specific programmes had been developed to combat it. Measures to protect and support women victims of domestic and sexual violence focused on preventing their becoming victims a second time as a result of coming forward. With regard to possible defamation suits against victims, her delegation would provide further information on the measures being taken by the Government to address the problem in writing.

57. On the issue of refugee women from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, she noted that the Government sought to provide an effective response to the problem of sexual and domestic violence. For example, it offered men and women courses on gender equality and violence prevention. Further information could be provided to the Committee in writing.

58. **Ms. Lee** Yun-a (Republic of Korea) said that migrant women from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea who had suffered sexual violence were offered support, including counselling. Measures to combat cyber violence included regular monitoring of platforms and strengthened cross-border cooperation to prevent the circulation of obscene materials. Victims of sexual violence facing defamation lawsuits or accusations of false claims had access to free legal aid.

59. **Mr. Kwon** Hyeok Yong (Republic of Korea) said that administrative fines were currently the only penalties that could be imposed on persons who violated restraining orders. However, work was under way on a legislative bill to allow for the immediate arrest of such persons.

60. The national police force was actively involved in tackling online sexual offences, including through strengthened cross-border cooperation. It sought to crack down on websites and social media services that hosted sexually violent material and focused in

particular on punishing persons who disseminated such material for profit and without the consent of the victims.

Articles 7 to 9

61. **Ms. Nadaraia** said that the slow rate of progress with regard to women's participation was a source of concern. The Republic of Korea was among the lowest-ranking countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in terms of women in managerial positions. Women made up less than 20 per cent of parliamentarians; their representation in local government was even lower. During the period 2013–2017, only 6 out of 19 government ministers had been women. It would be interesting to know why women were not adequately represented in national and local elections, in spite of existing legislation on quotas, electoral funding and political parties that sought to promote gender equality. What sanctions existed to punish infringements of those provisions?

62. The National Police Agency had failed to increase its intake of female students and the vast majority of women in the police force were junior ranking officers. In the education sector, although over half of teachers were female, the existence of a glass ceiling was reflected in the low number of women principals. The gender gap was even greater at university level: women's share of faculty posts at public universities stood at just under 15 per cent. What plans did the Government have to address the gender imbalance in the education sector and promote the appointment of women to senior posts?

63. It appeared that social progress had failed to keep pace with the country's economic development and that a glass ceiling still prevented women's full participation in society. She invited the delegation to provide information on policy measures to foster women's leadership in the public sector and to attract more women into the diplomatic service.

64. **Ms. Hayashi** said that alternative sources indicated that the Republic of Korea had no universal compulsory birth registration system. As a result, children born in the Republic of Korea to foreign parents faced the risk of statelessness. The problem had a disproportionate impact on female migrants: if their children were not registered, it was difficult to obtain identity documents for them. The issue had been raised during the universal periodic review in 2017. What steps had been taken since then to adopt and implement legislation and procedures to ensure that all children born in the Republic of Korea were registered?

65. A related issue was the naturalization of foreign women married to Korean nationals. In principle, they were entitled to apply for citizenship after two years. Nevertheless, the process was extremely lengthy and it appeared that, although the requirement for a letter of sponsorship from the Korean spouse had been withdrawn, it was still enforced in practice. She would be interested to know what steps the Government planned to take to amend existing provisions and procedures relating to naturalization to minimize the negative impact on that group of women.

66. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that the level of women's representation in the public sector was a concern and that traditional cultural attitudes contributed to the existence of a glass ceiling for women. The Government had developed a plan of action to enhance women's representation in the public sector, including through annual, sectoral targets and measures to ensure compliance and monitor implementation.

67. **Ms. Kim** Hye Jin (Republic of Korea) said that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was actively working to create a pool of female managers and planned over a period of five years to appoint more women managers and senior officials. To that end, a new human resources performance evaluation system would be introduced to offer promotion opportunities to high performing women and encourage their advancement to senior positions, including heads of missions.

68. **Ms. Seo** Eun Hee (Republic of Korea) said that the Government planned to increase the proportion of women school principals to just over 40 per cent by 2022. Measures were being taken to improve the gender balance among faculty members at State universities, including through the use of incentives for institutions that performed well and consulting

services for poorly performing universities. Their performance would be evaluated using an established set of indicators.

69. In the public sector, a system to monitor institutional performance in the field of gender equality had also been established, with credits available to agencies and institutions that met the relevant targets. Plans to further improve women's participation included the introduction of quotas for appointments to senior positions and measures to promote women to leadership positions in government ministries.

70. **Mr. Lee** Jeong-yeon (Republic of Korea) said that the recruitment and promotion of principals in primary and secondary schools was managed by separate authorities. However, the Government planned to work together with those bodies to increase women's representation.

71. **Mr. Kwon** Hyeok Yong (Republic of Korea) said that the number of women joining the police force had risen in recent years and that measures were being taken to increase their representation to 15 per cent. Furthermore, the authorities were considering moving away from a segregated recruitment model and planned to offer more opportunities for promotion to women in the police force.

72. **Mr. Yun** Byung Seung (Republic of Korea) said that, although the Republic of Korea had a birth registration system for Korean nationals, no separate system existed for foreigners. A bill to establish such a system had been defeated in the parliament. The Government was currently working to build the necessary social consensus on that issue.

73. Given the large number of applications and the various checks and assessments involved, the naturalization process was indeed lengthy. However, the Government was working on expediting the processing of applications from married migrant women, with an optimal target of six months. Migrant women married to Korean nationals residing in the country did not need to obtain a certificate of good character when applying to extend their stay. However, given the growing number of marriages between Korean nationals and foreigners and the need to prevent and address any human rights violations relating to such marriages, the onus had been placed on the Korean spouse to demonstrate the stability of the marriage. Since 2011, background information, including criminal and health records, were submitted to the relevant authorities and a certificate of good character had to be provided by the spouse who was a Korean national.

74. **Ms. Lee** Jeong-yeon (Republic of Korea) said that the Government ensured the right to education of migrant children, including undocumented migrants, as long they could prove that they were living in the Republic of Korea. Teachers were not obliged to report undocumented pupils to the authorities and all children had access to health and counselling services. Measures were planned to raise awareness of the need to protect migrant children.

75. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that humanitarian support was provided to migrant women, including undocumented migrants. The Government was engaged in compiling comprehensive data broken down by gender, including on domestic and sexual violence, with a view to preventing the further victimization of women.

76. **Ms. Hayashi** said that she would be interested to know whether the Government planned to introduce a compulsory birth registration system for all children.

77. **Mr. Yun** Byung Seung (Republic of Korea) said that the issue could not be resolved without the consensus and support of society. Indeed, a bill on birth registration had been defeated in the National Assembly. To that end, the Government was engaged in dialogue with all relevant stakeholders and would move forward with plans to introduce birth registration for undocumented children once consensus had been achieved.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.